

Miscellaneous Notes

1. OCCURRENCE OF *RHINOPOMA HARDWICKEI* GRAY, 1831, THE LESSER RAT-TAILED BAT IN A HUMID AREA OF COASTAL MYSORE

Brosset (1962)¹ in his study of the bats of Central and Western India recorded *Rhinopoma hardwickei* Gray, 1831, the Lesser Rat-tailed Bat from 16 localities, all of them considered to be arid or semi-arid. This observation, and the known distribution of the species in the arid Middle East led Brosset to conclude that this species is associated with xerothermic conditions. The species has not so far been recorded from the Western Ghats, Konkan and Kanara, which receive heavy rainfall and remain humid throughout the year. Brosset (1962) has ruled out its occurrence in this area. Contrary to his statement the present record brings coastal Mysore under its distribution range in India.

During a recent survey of bats in connection with the epidemiological investigations of Kyasanur Forest disease, a colony of *Rhinopoma hardwickei* was located in a cave, right at the sea coast, at Gokarna, North Kanara District, Mysore State, on March 26, 1971. The locality receives an annual rainfall of approximately 350 cm. About one hundred individuals were found inhabiting a natural underground cave in laterite rock. The cave is locally known as 'Gogarbhā'. It is approximately 15 m × 6 m × 2.5 m in dimension with a couple of large lateral excavations and a dozen smaller pockets. When visited in the morning the climate inside was warm and extremely humid. Four specimens, all of them males, were collected for identification. Other species of bats in the same colony associated with *Rhinopoma hardwickei* were *Hipposideros speoris*, *Hipposideros bicolor* and *Rhinolophus rouxi*. These three species formed two-third of the total population.

The association of *Rhinopoma hardwickei* with *Hipposideros speoris* has been reported earlier (Brosset 1962). However, the association of this species with *Hipposideros bicolor* and *Rhinolophus rouxi* observed for the first time is worth mentioning.

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¹ BROSET, A. (1962): The Bats of Central and Western India, Part I. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 59 (1) : 1-57.